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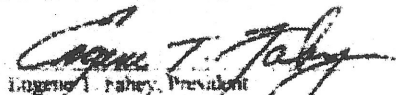
**Statement Regarding the "Consent Agreement and Order"
Entered in Complaint No. 2016-002: In Re: Chad Harding**

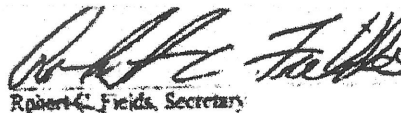
The West Virginia Board of Funeral Service Examiners met today, July 18, 2019, for the purpose of discussing the impact of Chad Harding's November 13, 2017, criminal convictions on his licensure with this Board. All seven current members of the Board participated in the meeting.

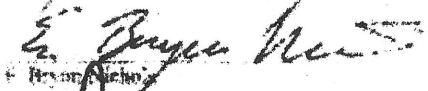
By way of background, on July 19, 2017, the Board entered into a "Consent Agreement and Order" with Mr. Harding that resolved Complaint No. 2016-002. Specifically, the Board, as constituted at that time, agreed to impose a six-month suspension of Mr. Harding's funeral director and crematory operator licenses, followed by six months of probation, as a result of allegations that Mr. Harding violated the law with respect to his handling of pre-need funeral contracts. Mr. Harding denied any wrongdoing, but accepted the disciplinary action. Mr. Harding subsequently pled guilty to three charges of insurance fraud in the Circuit Court of Putnam County, stemming from the same conduct at issue in the Board's complaint.

Following the entry of the "Consent Agreement and Order" in 2017, an entirely new Board was appointed. The current membership of the Board takes this opportunity to memorialize its disagreement with terms of the "Consent Agreement and Order" entered by the previous membership of the Board. However, the current Board understands that, after meeting with counsel, it is legally bound by the "Consent Agreement and Order" and can take no further disciplinary action against Mr. Harding based upon his convictions as they stem from the same conduct alleged, and resolved, in the "Consent Agreement and Order."

The Board is firmly committed to regaining the trust of the public and stands ready to fully fulfill its obligation to enforce the *West Virginia Funeral Service Examiners Act* in the future.


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